



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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RADULESCU, GORDON-REED, AND SPARR RECEIVE LITERARY AWARDS

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(Richmond, Virginia) – The Library of Virginia is pleased to announce the winners of the 12th Annual Library of Virginia Literary Awards honoring Virginia authors or, in the case of nonfiction, works on a Virginia subject. This year's awards celebration was hosted by award-winning Virginia author Adriana Trigiani. Awards categories were fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and literary lifetime achievement. Winners of the Library of Virginia's Annual Literary Awards and the People's Choice Awards receive a \$3,500 prize and an engraved crystal book.

Domnica Radulescu is the recipient of the fiction prize for *Train to Trieste*, which the independent panel of judges labeled a stunning debut novel written in lyrically beautiful prose that transcends the pitfalls of first novels. Radulescu tells the story of a young woman's quest for freedom and shelter in Soviet-dominated Romania during the late 1970s, of her escape to build an American life overshadowed by that she left behind, and her pilgrimage at middle age to reclaim the landscapes of her youth. Combining the intensity of first love with the stark realities of political repression and the melancholy of exile, *Train to Trieste* is a haunting journey to a distant country as well as an odyssey into the human heart. Radulescu was born in Romania and came to the United States in 1983. She holds a Ph.D. in French and Italian literature from the University of Chicago, and is currently a professor of romance languages and chair of the women's studies program at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia.

The other finalists for the fiction prize were Geraldine Brooks for *People of the Book* and David A. Taylor for *Success: Stories*. Geraldine Brooks won the Library's 2006 fiction prize for *March*, which also was honored with the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for fiction.

The winner of the 2009 literary award for the best work of nonfiction is Annette Gordon-Reed for *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family*. The judges felt that *The Hemingses of Monticello* offers a bountiful meditation about race, family, and human choices that encourages readers to think differently about America and the contingencies of history. Gordon-Reed, a professor of law at New York Law School since 1992, won the 2009 Pulitzer Prize in History for *The Hemingses of Monticello*.

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The other finalists for the nonfiction prize were Drew Gilpin Faust for *This Republic of Suffering: Death and The American Civil War* and Nancy Ross Hugo and Jeffrey Kirwan for *Remarkable Trees of Virginia*. The judges also selected an honorable mention in this category: *Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court, and Buck v. Bell*, by Paul A. Lombardo.

Lisa Russ Spaar is the recipient of the poetry prize for *Satin Cash*, her fourth collection of verse. The judges felt that Spaar's poems abound in surprising inversions of syntax, and a diction striking for its sudden shifts from demotic to baroquely laden speech—from imagistic precision to statement. Spaar's *Satin Cash* is the work of a highly accomplished and ambitious poet. Spaar is an associate professor in English and the founder and director of the Area Program in Poetry Writing for undergraduates at the University of Virginia.

The other poetry prize finalists were Claudia Emerson for *Figure Studies: Poems* and Eric Pankey for *The Pear as One Example: New & Selected Poems, 1984-2008*. Pankey won the Library's poetry prize in 2001 for *Cenotaph: Poems*.

The winner of the People's Choice Award in the fiction category is *The Legal Limit* by Martin Clark and in the nonfiction category, *The Place to Be: Washington, CBS, and the Glory Days of Television News* by Roger Mudd. The finalists for People's Choice Awards are selected by a panel of independent Virginia booksellers and librarians from the list of books nominated for the Library's Literary Awards. Winners are decided by readers voting online and in libraries.

Also honored at this year's Literary Awards was Doreen Rappaport for *Abe's Honest Words: The Life of Abraham Lincoln*, winner of the third annual Whitney and Scott Cardozo Award for Children's Literature. In selecting this book a juried panel reviewed 21 nominated titles from authors whose works focused on literature for children ages four through eight. Nominated titles with a publication date of 2008 were accepted from the greater mid-Atlantic region.

Two outstanding Virginia poets were winners of this year's Weinstein Poetry Prize: Eleanor Ross Taylor and Charles Wright. A longtime resident of Charlottesville, Virginia, Eleanor Ross Taylor has been publishing books of poetry since 1960, when her impressive volume *Wilderness of Ladies* appeared. Taylor is the author of *Welcome Eumenides*, *Days Going/Days Coming Back*, *Late Leisure*, and two volumes of selected poems, most recently *Captive Voices: New and Selected Poems, 1960–2008*. She is the recipient of the Shelley Memorial Prize awarded by the Poetry Society of America, the Library of Virginia Poetry Award, and the Aiken Taylor Award for Modern American Poetry.

Charles Wright's work is read and admired all over the world. Wright is the author of 21 volumes of poetry, two volumes of translations, and two volumes of "improvisations and interviews." His poems have appeared ten times in the Best American Poetry series. He has won the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Griffin Poetry Prize, the PEN Translation Prize, and the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, and he has twice won the Library of Virginia Poetry Award. In 1999 he was elected a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets. For nearly three decades he has taught poetry and writing at the University of Virginia.

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The recipient of the 2009 Library of Virginia Lifetime Achievement Award is John Grisham. Since publishing *A Time to Kill* in 1988, Grisham has written one novel a year (his other books are *The Firm*, *The Pelican Brief*, *The Client*, *The Chamber*, *The Rainmaker*, *The Runaway Jury*, *The Partner*, *The Street Lawyer*, *The Testament*, *The Brethren*, *A Painted House*, *Skippping Christmas*, *The Summons*, *The King of Torts*, *Bleachers*, *The Last Juror*, *The Broker*, *Playing for Pizza*, and *The Appeal*) and all of them have become international best sellers. There are currently over 235 million John Grisham books in print worldwide, which have been translated into 29 languages. Nine of his novels have been turned into films.

Next year's Literary Awards Celebration will be held on October 16, 2010.

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